

Soaring's EDITOR-TO-BE

Alex Dawydoff, the now editor of *Soaring*, was born in St. Petersburg, Russia (now Leningrad), on December 14, 1903, and came to the United States with his mother and sister in 1921. In the United States he attended Alma College, Alma, Mich., and Columbia University, New York, N.Y.

He has been interested in aviation since childhood, as his father was on the board of Directors of Anatra, an aircraft manufacturing concern building Morane-Saulnier aircraft under license. In 1925 he joined Sikorsky Aviation Co. who was building the twin-engine S-29 at Roosevelt Field, Long Island. After a period of work in a brokerage office on Wall Street, in 1928 Alex joined a newly founded aviation firm, Air Associates, Inc., where he was employed as salesman.

In 1928, J.C. Penney, Jr., who imported several gliders from Germany together with three German instructors and formed the American Motorless Aviation Corp. at Cape Code Mass., persuaded him to try gliding. One of the AMAC sailplanes, the Darmstadt, was later rebuilt and flown by Jack O'Meara. They flew primary Zoegling gliders all that summer from the dunes of Cape Cod but with the coming of fall the AMAC folded and was sold to other interests as Penney grew tired of it, mostly because he had a hard time learning to fly. Though, in the beginning, Alex was rather skeptical of powerless flight, having taken instructions in

powered aircraft, even the simple straightforward and gentle turns in these primaries fascinated him to such an extent that from then on he became a staunch supporter of gliding.

Alex's further indoctrination into the sport was accomplished by Hawley Bowlus who interested the Cassell Flying Service of Flushing, N.Y., in starting a glider flying school using Bowlus training gliders. Hawley worked with him until he was satisfied that Alex could fly and instruct according to his methods (auto-tow). Here at Flushing, Alex had his first and only serious accident when the glider crashed from an altitude of 150 feet because of a broken turnbuckle terminal at the elevator control cable and he spent more than a year in the hospital. The accident left him with a permanently stiff left leg, but he still is able to fly, despite this.

After leaving the hospital he decided to earn his living by writing and was hired by *Air Trails* magazine as technical editor. Here he started the first Glider Column ever to appear in an aviation magazine. The column was very successful and responsible for a number of readers to take up soaring. Paul Tuntland was one of them. To continue his glider flying activities Alex joined the Airhoppers Gliding and Soaring Club. His soaring and writing activities were responsible for meeting and becoming friendly with such "stars" of gliding as Dick duPont, Lewin Barringer, Ralph Barnaby, Dr. Klemperer, Peter Riedel and a host of others. Alex feels that knowing them and being able to call them friends has been one of his brightest experiences.

With the exception of two years during the war, when he was working in the T-2 Section of the USAAF and one year during which he redesigned and had built a Kirby Cadet glider for the then proposed N.Y. State Aviation Vocational Training Program, Alex was with *Air Trails* and its sister publication *Air Progress* until 1956.

In 1945, together with Steve and Ginny Bennis, Ted Pfeiffer and Guy Storer, he organized the Gliding and Soaring Service, Inc., at

Sanford, Fla. It was the first glider school approved by the Veteran
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by WILLIAM S. IVANS
SSA President

I know that I speak for the entire Soaring Society in extending a warm welcome to Alex Dawydoff, the first full-time Editor of *Soaring*.

We have had a good magazine under Lloyd Licher's part-time editorship. We may expect a better one, with Alex devoting his great experience and enthusiasm to *Soaring*, full time.

The creation of a full-time editor position by the SSA Board in February happily coincided with Alex' decision to leave *FLYING* magazine, where he had served for a number of years, with distinction, as Managing Editor and Senior Editor.



William S. Ivans
SSA President

We shall be doubly blessed, as Lloyd can at last devote full attention to his basic administrative and promotional duties, which he has had to put aside each month as the insistent publication deadline approached.

The fortunes and membership of SSA began a dramatic and sustained rise immediately upon establishment of a permanent staff in 1957, under the leadership of our Executive Secretary, Lloyd Licher. Our expansion of this staff to include Alex as Editor will unquestionably provide additional stimulus to growth, and a wider range of service to members.



Photo by Hans Groenhoff

Alex Dawydoff